



**Quad Cities COVID-19 Coalition
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Feb. 23, 2021**

Current COVID-19 case count

Scott County – Total of 18,232*

Total deaths in Scott County: 204

*due to the reporting changes and not a jump in coronavirus activity (see remarks below)

Rock Island County – 8 new cases since Monday; total of 12,792

Currently in hospital in Rock Island County: 19

Total deaths in Rock Island County: 304

Newly reported deaths: a woman in her 90s and a woman in 80s, both of whom had been hospitalized

Today's call

A video recording of today's media briefing can be found at
<https://www.scot tcountyiowa.com/health/covid19/news>

Please take only one time slot for COVID vaccine

Remarks from Nita Ludwig, administrator, Rock Island County Health Department

We hear the stories, too, about the lengths people go to secure a coveted time slot for a COVID-19 vaccine appointment. We understand that checking all of these websites is stressful and feels a little like lady luck has to be on your side. As more vaccine comes into our community, times and opportunities will become more plentiful. We're just not there yet.

The health department and our healthcare and pharmacy partners have one request: once you have a confirmed time slot, please stop looking for another one. This time slot and dose are reserved for you. Double booking slots "just in case" takes away an opportunity for another person who is just as desperate as you are. Calling and canceling your slot forces a scramble to fill it as quickly as possible. Please just accept your time slot and move mountains to keep it. We also ask that you remember to bring the vaccine record card you got after getting your first dose to your second-dose opportunity. This helps your provider verify the appropriate time interval and what manufacturer you received.

Illinois Department of Public Health officials on Monday told us that we soon could see more vaccine coming our community. The Emergency Use Authorization for the one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine could come as early as this month. Just think about how another vaccine will change the landscape – especially one that requires only one dose. This vaccine has been

shown to prevent 85% of serious cases and hospitalizations and 100% in preventing deaths where it was tested. If approved, the three available vaccines will make herd immunity possible, maybe even by late this summer. All three vaccines will combine to get us to the other side of this horrible chapter in world history.

In the meantime, let's celebrate that almost 22,000 doses have been given in Rock Island County. The state health department updates these statistics on Friday, so we know that even more people already are starting to build immunity from vaccinations given since Friday.

During these trying times, we understand that it's hard to keep the plight of others in mind. We're all suffering. Remember that feeling 10-11 months ago that we were all in this together? We still are.

Iowa makes change to data reporting; please plan ahead if you plan to travel

Remarks from Edward Rivers, director, Scott County Health Department

The Iowa Department of Public Health has made some recent updates to COVID-19 testing information on the coronavirus.iowa.gov website. The site will now be reporting total tests conducted, a shift from reporting the number of individuals tested.

During the early months of the pandemic, the state reported the number of new positive COVID-19 case-patients and positivity rate daily. At that time, understanding the characteristics of the people being impacted by this new virus was very important. It told us how many new cases were in the state, what their characteristics were, and helped public health target our mitigation efforts accordingly. Over time, as the rate of testing increased, monitoring overall trends in addition to recent activity has become increasingly more important. You can now find information on the total number of tests, which better reflects recent COVID-19 activity in the state. A larger number of cases was reported over the weekend; however, this was due to the new reporting changes and not a jump in coronavirus activity.

As we have mentioned before, COVID-19 vaccination data is also available on the site. As of today, a total of 25,800 doses of vaccine have been administered to Scott County residents. That includes just under 14,000 first doses and just under 6,000 second doses. We continue to receive 2,250 doses of vaccine weekly and spread the vaccine out among healthcare providers to vaccinate the 65+ population and to ourselves to vaccinate the Phase 1B Tier 1 priority groups. We expect to receive more information in the next few days on what vaccine supply will look like entering into March.

March means spring ... which means spring break. We know this has been a long, long winter and nothing sounds better than a getaway. However, travel during an ongoing pandemic isn't without its risks. The CDC continues to report that cases are extremely high and avoiding travel is recommended. New to their travel guidance:

- For domestic and international travel, masks are required on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and bus and train stations.
- For international travel, all air passengers coming to the United States, including U.S. citizens, are required to have a negative COVID-19 test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before they board a flight to the United States.

If you choose to still make spring break travel plans, we encourage you and your family to plan ahead for these new requirements. We also ask that you create plans for how you will avoid crowds, how you will ensure protecting yourself from getting exposed to others who could potentially be ill, and how you will handle getting sick while traveling or upon your return.

We have finally found ourselves in a more stable point in the pandemic and are on the verge of seeing the benefits of herd immunity of having groups of people vaccinated in our community. We need to work together to bring our community safely toward the light at the end of the pandemic tunnel.

More information

- www.TogetherQC.com
- coronavirus.iowa.gov
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/regionmetrics?regionID=2>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/countymetrics?county=Rock%20Island>
- <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/facilities/Pages/Covid19Response.aspx>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/long-term-care-facility-outbreaks-covid-19>

###